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On the heels of contaminated peanut butter causing a nationwide salmonella outbreak, U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk is reintroducing legislation to tighten Food and Drug Administration testing oversight.

Kirk, R-Highland Park, is joining with U.S. Rep. Peter Roskam, R-Wood Dale, in sponsoring the Keeping America's Food Safe Act. It would require all test results that show a potential contamination to be reported to the FDA for evaluation under the agency's Reportable Food Registry and allow the agency to initiate mandated recalls of food products.

Currently, domestic food suppliers, importers, and private testing labs are not required to report all testing data, leaving the FDA in the dark when a shipment fails to meet U.S. standards, Kirk said. It also leaves open the possibility suppliers could "shop around" for a lab willing to give it favorable results to gain entry into the U.S. food supply.

"Parents have a right to purchase safe food for their children," Kirk said. "Contaminated foods should not end up in America's shopping baskets. From cookies to snack mix to pet food, more than 2,500 products have been recalled in the latest incident alone."

Kirk and Roskam introduced similar legislation in April 2008.

Nine people are believed to have died and 600 sickened by the contaminated peanut butter from the Peanut Corporation of America. The company found salmonella contamination on 12 occasions in the past two years, but it still sold the products after shopping around for a favorable test result.

Annually, 325,000 Americans are hospitalized and 5,000 die from food-borne illnesses caused by contamination.